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## The Dynamics of Non-Governmental Organizations and Their Development in Central Asia (In the Case of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan)

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**Abstract:** *Globallashuv sharoitida mintaqaviy hamkorlik o'ziga xos tarzda kechmoqda. Ya'ni zamonaviy tendensiyalar mintaqaviy hamkorlikning shakllanishi va rivojlanishiga ta'sir qilmoqda. Bu ikki jarayonning bir qancha jihatlarini qayd etish mumkin. Ushbu maqolada mintaqaviy hamkorlikning globallashuv bilan qiyosiy tahlili ochib beriladi. Tadqiqotchilarning yondashuvlari tahlil qilinadi.*

**Keywords:** *hamkorlik, globallashuv, muammo, konflikt, umummanfaatdorlik, davlatlararo hamkorlik, subyekt, ixtiyoriylik, ummummilliy manfaatlar.*

After independence, the countries of the region have accumulated certain experiences in forming a new political system and basing it on democratic principles. In this regard, the formation of non-governmental organizations was also important. Another necessity for the formation of non-governmental organizations is the fruit of the state's desire for cooperation with the international community and the region. According to experts, this process took place at different levels in the countries of the region, and they note that NGOs have entered a new stage of formation at the regional level. This is related to the state's capabilities, the creation of a legal foundation based on democratic principles in society, and the effectiveness of state policy on the formation of non-governmental organizations.

In the early years of independence, the limited financial resources in the formation of non-governmental organizations caused certain difficulties because the sponsors were mostly foreign organizations. The reason is that foreign funding organizations did not have enough information and experience about the region and the operating NGOs. By the beginning of the new century, the activities of NGOs began to show peculiarities. Well-known NGOs have begun to expand their scope of activity by settling mainly in the capitals. In the late 1990s, bureaucratic obstacles, the complexity of the NGO registration process, and high fees prevented the proliferation of NGOs. The countries of the region did not have enough experience in the formation of NGOs and their legal basis. During the Soviet period, the totalitarian approach to the formation of NGOs in the society caused people's apprehensive attitude towards NGOs even after independence.

However, by the beginning of the new century, the countries of the region, which became well known to the international community, began to strengthen cooperation with international organizations. This was

also reflected in the policy of improving the activities of NGOs. The expansion of opportunities for international financing of NGO activities created the foundation for the formation of many organizations in the region. For example, in the first year of independence, there were 95 NGOs in Uzbekistan, and by 2010, their number had increased to over 5,100. In this case, the expansion of cooperation with international organizations in matters related to civil initiatives and meeting the political needs of the population led to a sharp increase in external financing. Often, these organizations dealt with humanitarian issues, covering the problems of certain social groups, such as women and youth.

Now let's analyze the stages of development of NGOs in the section of countries. We will try to analyze the process by approaching the issue from the point of view of the region in 3 periods: the first period from independence to 2000, the second period from 2000-2010, and the third period from 2010 to now.

The initial stage of the development of non-governmental non-profit organizations in Kazakhstan is associated with the emergence of organizations focused on specific issues such as environmental problems and identity as a result of the restructuring policy. According to the data, 6 NGOs were registered in 1989. Common during this period were environmental associations and historical societies. As American researcher Sarah Henderson points out, "The NGO sector that emerged in the first decade of the post-Soviet era was weak, and their cooperation with the political elite and the population was not well established.

The second stage of the development of non-governmental non-profit organizations in Kazakhstan covers the period from independence to the beginning of the new century. The uniqueness of this period was characterized by the appearance of international donors in the country. In particular, donors such as the UN Development Program, the Soros Foundation, and Eurasia have established cooperation with NGOs in Kazakhstan. During this period, that is, in 1991-1999, the number of NGOs increased significantly. These new organizations were supported in the form of grants, seminars, training and roundtable discussions. Many of these new NGOs focused on the problems arising from the transition process, such as the collapse of economic, social and industrial infrastructure.

During this period, it can be noted that the "Central Asian Sustainable Development Network" (CASDIN) was formed as an NGO that contributed to the regional cooperation process.

This organization was mainly an information-methodological center and was engaged in collecting and analyzing information about NGOs and them in the region. About 700 copies of the Bulletin are published by the organization and distributed throughout the region. This played an important role in forming an information bridge in establishing cooperation between NGOs in the region. Another success of this period was the establishment of the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations of Kazakhstan. This made it possible to coordinate the activities of NGOs, to support them organizationally and methodically. At the same time, this Association has shown enthusiasm in establishing cooperation with NGOs in the region. In particular, it can be noted that in 1997, the head of the organization, G.Djamanov, organized a business trip to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and met with officials in those regions.

In 2000, a new phase began when the issue of cooperation mechanisms with NGOs was raised at the state level. This stage is explained by the growth of the civil sector not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. The President of Kazakhstan, N. Nazarboev, in his traditional address to the people, for the first time touched on the role of NGOs in society, and noted that they are an important connecting tool between the government and society in the development of Kazakhstan, and that they should start receiving serious state support, which should be implemented by allocating state grants to socially important projects. During this period, institutions such as the Confederation of NGOs of Kazakhstan (KNOK), the Environmental Form of NGOs were formed and began to contribute to regional cooperation.

In particular, the "Jan" organization for the protection of disabled people has established cooperation by uniting all NGOs of this type in the region.

On March 17, 2003, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan issued a Decision No. 253 on state support of non-governmental organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2003-2005. The decision reflected the mechanism of the use of NGOs by the state and specified the procedure and amount of state grants. In addition, during this period, in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2010, a total of four NGO forums were held. The participation of the President and representatives of the diplomatic corps at the Forum in 2003 determined its status. The representatives of the neighboring republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan also took part in the forums. This event provided an opportunity to study the possibilities of sharing experience at the regional level and define the perspectives of cooperation.

The fourth stage, which continues to this day, began in the 10th years of the new century, and at this stage, constructive cooperation between the authorities and non-governmental non-profit organizations increased. The amount of grants allocated by the state has increased by 7.2 times by 2016. Since 2017, the state has also started awarding prizes for the purpose of financial support for NGOs. For example, 68.7 million tenge were allocated in 2017, and 81.7 million tenge were allocated in 2021. In this, the condition of cooperation with NGOs in the region was included as one of the criteria for receiving the award, paying attention to regional cooperation. Another important reality of this period is the establishment of the NGO Academy. This is an educational institution aimed at improving the skills of NGO leaders, in which NGO leaders from other countries of the region began to improve their skills. For example, in 2020, more than 800 people from 300 NGOs received training, and more than 50 of them were employees of NGOs from neighboring republics. Another project that contributed to regional cooperation during this period is the "Cooperation for Innovations" project. this project is considered the only regional project studying the problems related to civil society in the region, and all the countries in the region have joined. This project has been operating since 2012. It is known that the information space plays an important role in the development of regional cooperation. This project is considered to be a project focused on this, and branches and representatives of the project were formed in all countries of the region. During the pandemic, they had the opportunity to improve their skills in using innovative methods of information exchange for civil society organizations. For example, the representative of Uzbekistan, Bobur Bekmurodov, expressed the following thoughts about this project: "This project is important in understanding the needs of civil society organizations. Another important aspect of this project is that information exchange is carried out between trusted partners of the project. apart from that it is an open platform for everyone". Within the framework of the "Looking to the Future" project, a development strategy project of community organizations in Central Asia until 2025 was developed.

In general, if we analyze the formation and development of NGOs in Kazakhstan from the perspective of regional cooperation. With the passage of time, it can be noted that their number of efforts in the way of regional cooperation is increasing, and at the same time, there are problems regarding the balance between the authorities and NGOs, and the general strategy.

Kyrgyzstan. The first stage of NGO development in Kyrgyzstan dates back to 1991-2000, which was associated with an increase in the number of political parties and citizen initiative groups. During this period, approximately in 1993 and 1994, national non-governmental non-profit organizations were established, and international organizations such as the Kyrgyz American Committee for Human Rights and the Soros Foundation began to operate in the country. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan began to take the lead in the region. The reason is that the influx of foreign donors in other republics of the region was not as fast as Kyrgyzstan. Of course, there were several reasons for this. In particular, it is possible to note that the priority of democratic values in the state policy is emphasized, that the government has created all-round conditions for the activities of international donors, and others. In particular, in the early years

of independence, President A. Akaev supported the opening of NGOs. The development of the NGO sector in the 1990s was spontaneous and chaotic. In some cases, one-day organizations were formed, the purpose of which was to implement a single project for a short period of time. For example, in the annual report of the Soros Foundation in 1996, NGOs were mentioned, and most of them were listed as associations organizing conferences and forums. Or, if on average more than 200 NGOs were registered per year in the years covered by this stage, it is noted that about 10% of them submitted monthly reports and operated regularly. During this period, NGOs such as the Kyrgyz People's Assembly and the Interbilim Center contributed to regional cooperation in their respective fields. The People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan established cooperation with Kazakh, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek national cultural centers and won grants by participating in joint projects, while the "Interbilim" center established cooperation in organizing the study of young people from neighboring republics, mainly Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, at educational institutions in Kyrgyzstan. This was the basis for the formation of strong friendships between young people at that time and for further strengthening today.

In the second phase, which began at the beginning of the new century, the tendency of NGOs to demand the interests of civil society from the government gradually increased. Cooperation with political parties will also be established in this regard. During this period, the financial dependence of NGOs on international donors will continue. According to experts, more than 90% of NGOs in Kyrgyzstan are financed by international donors, including PROON, Soros Foundation, National Democratic Institute (NDI), Global Environmental Funds. As observed throughout the region, the number of NGOs is increasing in this republic as well. For example, in 2000, the number of NGOs was 4,966, in 2006 there were 13,018, and by 2010 there were 18,341. Relying on the non-state sector in the management of social processes has become one of the main priorities of the development of the Kyrgyz Republic. On the one hand, this tendency served to weaken the central authority and political instability, on the other hand, it allowed to ensure the free and real participation of citizens as well as state organizations in management. Political instability in the country has prompted the authorities of neighboring countries to be cautious in establishing relations with Kyrgyzstan. In particular, the change of political power due to the color revolution in the country in 2005 was considered a great success for NGOs and their international donors. In 2010, ethnic conflicts formed against the background of freedom caused a bloody conflict between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh. We do not want to dwell on this process in detail, since its causes and consequences are a separate topic. However, due to this process, it cannot be denied that the precautionary measures of the governments have created certain obstacles for the regional cooperation of NGOs. In particular, the number of cases of border closures, representatives of international donor organizations or events financed by them have increased.

The third stage, which began after the second state revolution in 2010, is related to the strengthening of the role of intergovernmental organizations in the issues of ensuring the stability of domestic and foreign policy, reforming the state energy system.

In 2016, the government began to pay more attention to public funding of NGOs. Through this, attention has been focused on limiting international donors promoting political instability or preventing national NGOs from becoming financially dependent on them.

Another characteristic of this period is the increase of NGOs related to ecology. In particular, it is noted that during this period they made up 14.4% of the total NGOs. At this stage, the activities of NGOs contributing to the strengthening of regional cooperation were revived. This is certainly related to the change in the geopolitical environment in the region and the policy of openness in neighboring Uzbekistan. during this period, the tendency of increasing the number of NGOs continued. By 2017, about 20,000 NGOs were registered, of which 800 were considered active NGOs that have been working for many years.



Nevertheless, the "Educational Initiatives Support Fund", "Asian Police Center", and "Kyrgyzstan Diplomats" public organization (established in 2019) played an important role in the development of cooperation during this period.

Recently, the formation and development of intellectual centers also played an important role in studying the processes in the region and establishing cooperation with NGOs. Including Center for Social and Economic Research in Kyrgyzstan (CASE); Institute for Regional Studies (IFRS); Economic policy institutes (Economic Policy Institute - Bishkek Consensus (EPI) strengthened cooperation with intellectual centers such as "caravan of knowledge" and "Mano" in Uzbekistan and organized roundtable discussions and meetings related to regional problems. The Institute of Regional Studies will hold 2 international conferences in 2022, more than 10 organized roundtable discussions and played an important role in the formation of dialogue between intellectuals in the region.

In general, NGOs in Kyrgyzstan are the leaders in the region in terms of attracting international donors and diversity of NGOs. however, there is no steady growth in these NGOs. Today, there are about 20,000 NGOs in the country, and there are about 1,000 that submit annual reports to the relevant government bodies. Dependence of NGOs on foreign donors is preserved. According to the data of the John Hopkins Institute, 82% of the funding is provided by non-governmental organizations, 65% of which are grants from foreign donors. Another problem is the low annual income of NGOs. The annual income of 52% of existing NGOs does not exceed 5 thousand US dollars. About 10% of NGOs have an annual income of more than 50,000 thousand US dollars.

Nevertheless, it can be noted that the efforts of NGOs in regional cooperation have increased. In recent years, they have been effectively cooperating in various fields, especially in the fields of ecology, education, and agriculture.

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